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Some Thoughts on the Value of a Study of
Compartmentation in the CIA ;

A prime objective of the Center is to keep as much of its work as possible focused on issues at the core of professional life in the CIA. We believe that a study of the various impacts of compartmentation in the Agency would fall within this area. We have in mind a study of compartmentation that would range well beyond the usual security aspects of the subject. If carefully defined, focused and researched, we believe a study of compartmentation could provide some useful insights on a range of perennial issues in the Agency. Depending on the exact focus of the study, we would hope to get some of the following:

- Some measure of how well the formal structures, coordinating mechanisms, etc., we have set up to overcome certain acknowledged impacts of compartmentation have functioned.
- A better idea as to whether needed security precautions which form the rationale for compartmentation in many instances are being effectively served by present organizational arrangements or are even being observed.

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- Some additional insights into the question of personnel effectiveness insofar as the presence or lack of adequate communication between components impacts on such effectiveness.
- A better sense of whether our general lack of personnel rotation between offices and components in the Agency is really hurting us.
- A clearer understanding of how the continuing trend toward greater professional specialization is affecting overall Agency performance.
- A better sense of the extent to which the free flow of ideas, so important to the early strength and vitality of the Agency is continuing.
- An understanding of how our compartmentation impact stacks up against similar phenomena in other government agencies and possibly in private business.
- A grasp as to how compartmentation impacts on the "central" features of a central intelligence system.

Obviously the research required to deal seriously with each of the elements above would call for a study probably too diffuse to be useful. We believe that a careful effort

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at defining the problem could, however, result in the necessary refinement of the approach and focus so as to concentrate on a reasonable number of relevant and rational objectives.

A main key to success in all the Center's projects is selection of the proper people to do them. If a project of this type is to be thorough enough to be useful, it will almost certainly take a team approach. No one individual could bring to it the experience and breadth to do the job in a reasonable length of time (6-9 months). We will need three to four people with one functioning as a team leader. We have secured an excellent team leader in STAT from the Office of Security. We are now considering officers from other Directorates who can bring to the effort the additional experience and perspectives.

The "project definition phase" will clearly be a challenging and interesting part of this study. It may well be necessary for the team to spend substantial time in classifying simply what is meant by compartmentation. Certainly the major areas in the Agency where compartmentation impacts, both in its formal and in its more subtle aspects will need substantial thought and discussion before the boundaries and specifics of the particular research approach are formed up. The Center's basic approach has been to solicit the views and participation of a wide variety of Agency officers in this process. Sketched briefly below

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are some tentative steps that might be among the first by the team working on compartmentation.

A Tentative Research Outline

- I. Grapple with the assumptions and rationale, both formal and informal, that underlie compartmentation in the CIA, such as:
 - Security, differing mission, organizational rivalry, etc.
 - Have these assumptions and rationale changed over the years?
- II. What are the principal processes in the Agency upon which compartmentation impacts? Among processes to examine might be:
 - x The collection/analysis process
 - x The integration of substantive production (political, economic, military)
 - x Resource allocation
 - x The relationship of field installations to headquarters.
 - x Employee careers
- III. Consider the development of a careful, limited set of case histories of the impact of compartmentation on several processes such as those above.
 - Synthesize implications drawn from the case studies.
- IV. If indicated by the results of the study, make some conceptual suggestions for change in Agency practices.